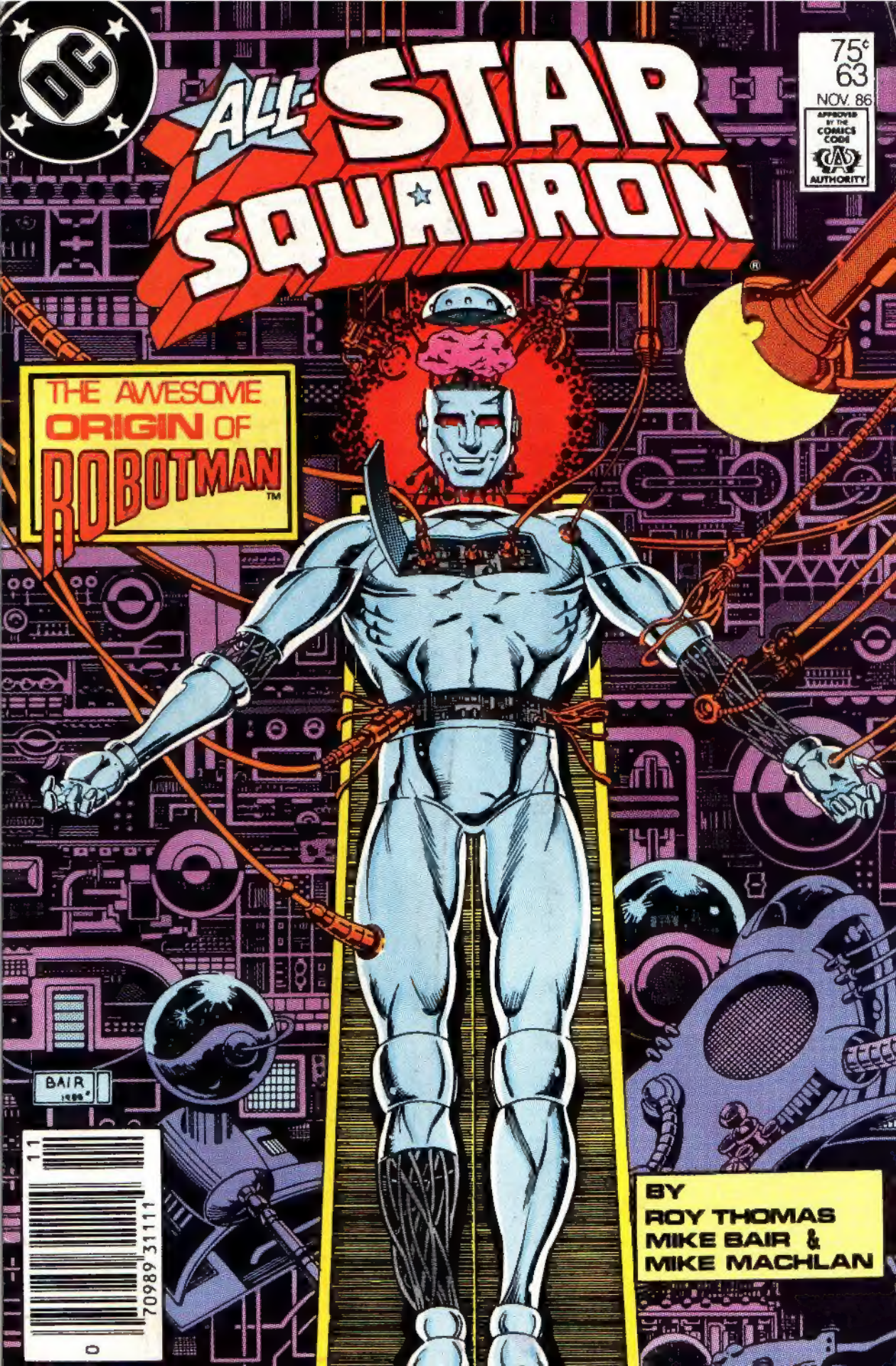
DC
ALL-STAR SQUADRON
75¢
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NOV. 86
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE AWESOME ORIGIN OF ROBOTMAN™
BAIR
BY
ROY THOMAS
MIKE BAIR &
MIKE MACHLAN
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Tales of The ALL-STAR SQUADRON

THE ORIGIN OF THE GOLDEN AGE

ROBOTMAN™

ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGIN STORY BY JERRY SIEGEL, JOE SHUSTER, AND ED DOBROTKA.

ROY THOMAS	MIKE BAIR	MIKE MACHLAN	DAVID CODY WEISS	CARL GAFFORD
WRITER	PENCILLER	INKER	LETTERER	COLORIST

FROM THE 1941 JOURNAL OF Dr. ROBERT CRANE:
"IT'S ALL SO *AMAZING!* MY BRAIN IS THROBBING, AS WELL IT MIGHT; MY PULSE, IF I HAD ONE, WOULD BE RACING. I SEE THAT I MUST PUT EVERYTHING DOWN ON *PAPER*, SO THAT, IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO *ME*--OR RATHER, TO THIS UNPRECEDENTED AMALGAM OF *MAN AND MACHINE* WHICH ONCE WAS A LIVING, BREATHING SCIENTIST--THE *KNOWLEDGE* OF THE MIRACLE THAT HAS OCCURRED THESE PAST FEW DAYS WILL NOT BE *LOST* FOREVER TO POOR, STUMBLING MANKIND...

ALL-STAR SQUADRON 63 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. Application to mail at second class postage rates is pending at New York, NY and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ALL-STAR SQUADRON, DC Comics Inc., Subscription Dept., P.O. Box 1308-F, Fort Lee, NJ 07024. Annual subscription rate $9.00. Outside U.S.A. $11.00 in U.S. funds. Copyright © 1986 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc.
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"THE TECHNICAL DETAILS I HAVE SET ASIDE IN SEPARATE NOTEBOOKS. I TELL HERE ONLY OF THE HUMAN ADVENTURE

"THAT BEGINS WITH A SLEEK AND SUITABLY EXPENSIVE ROADSTER HURTLING THROUGH THE LONG ISLAND NIGHT ON OCTOBER 31, 1941...

"...WHILE, INSIDE WHAT I SUPPOSE A PULP-MAGAZINE WOULD CALL 'THE PALATIAL LABORATORY-RESIDENCE OF RICH, YOUNG Prof. ROBERT CRANE'..."

WELL, CHUCK --LOOKS LIKE TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT!

YES. JUST THINK OF IT, BOB...

...SCIENTISTS HAVE DREAMED OF ACCOMPLISHING SOMETHING LIKE THIS FOR YEARS. BUT YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S GOING TO GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS HAVING ACTUALLY DONE IT!

I'M HONORED TO HAVE BEEN YOUR ASSISTANT!

YOU MEAN WE'VE DONE IT, CHUCK, I COULD NEVER HAVE--huh? WHAT'S THAT?

RRRIIIINNNG

OH, OF COURSE--THE DOORBELL!

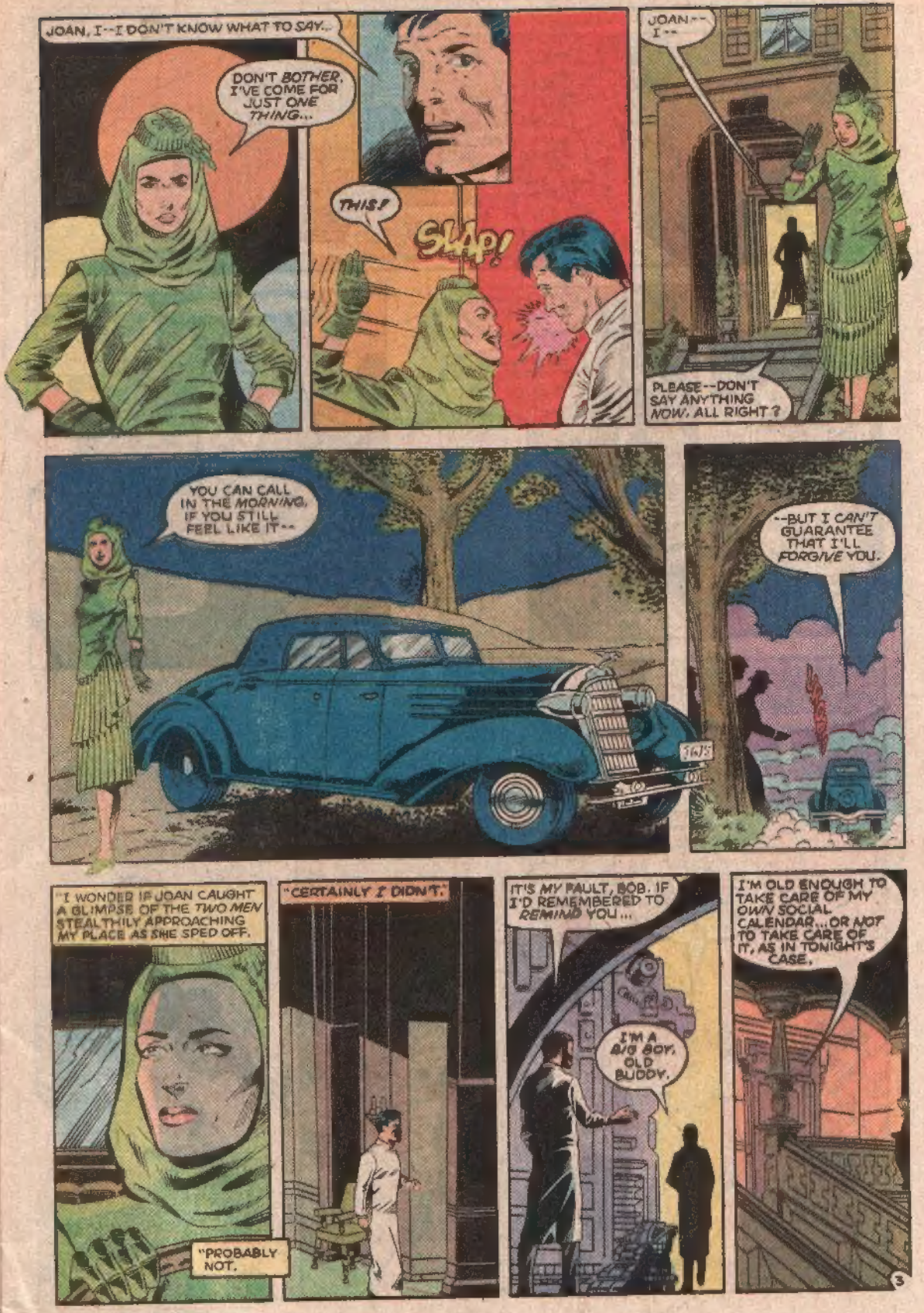
BUT WHO IN BLAZES COULD IT BE?

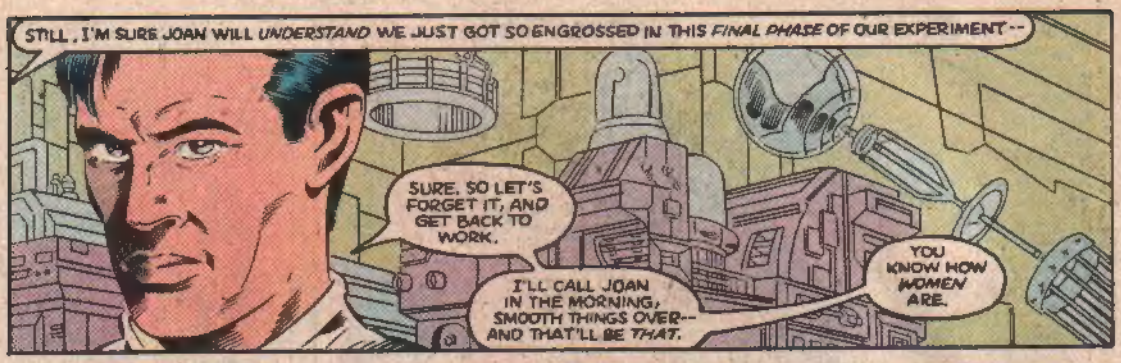
JOAN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HE--?

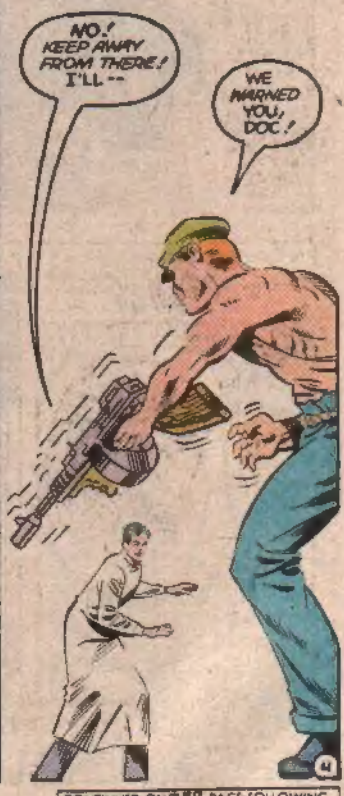
OH, GOOD GRIEF! WE HAD A DATE TO GO TO THE THEATRE TONIGHT, DIDN'T WE?

YOU WOULD REMEMBER NOW! BUT NOT TO WORRY--THE TICKETS WERE ONLY FOR "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE"!

AND I AM ONLY YOUR FIANCÉE, AFTER ALL. IT'S NOT AS IF I WERE YOUR LAB ASSISTANT OR ANYTHING!


JOAN, I--I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...
DON'T BOTHER, I'VE COME FOR JUST ONE THING...
THIS!
SLAP!
JOAN--I--
PLEASE--DON'T SAY ANYTHING NOW, ALL RIGHT?
YOU CAN CALL IN THE MORNING, IF YOU STILL FEEL LIKE IT--
--BUT I CAN'T GUARANTEE THAT I'LL FORGIVE YOU.
"I WONDER IF JOAN CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF THE TWO MEN STEALTHILY APPROACHING MY PLACE AS SHE SPED OFF.
"PROBABLY NOT.
"CERTAINLY I DIDN'T."
IT'S MY FAULT, BOB. IF I'D REMEMBERED TO REMIND YOU...
I'M A BIG BOY, OLD BUDDY.
I'M OLD ENOUGH TO TAKE CARE OF MY OWN SOCIAL CALENDAR...OR NOT TO TAKE CARE OF IT, AS IN TONIGHT'S CASE.
3





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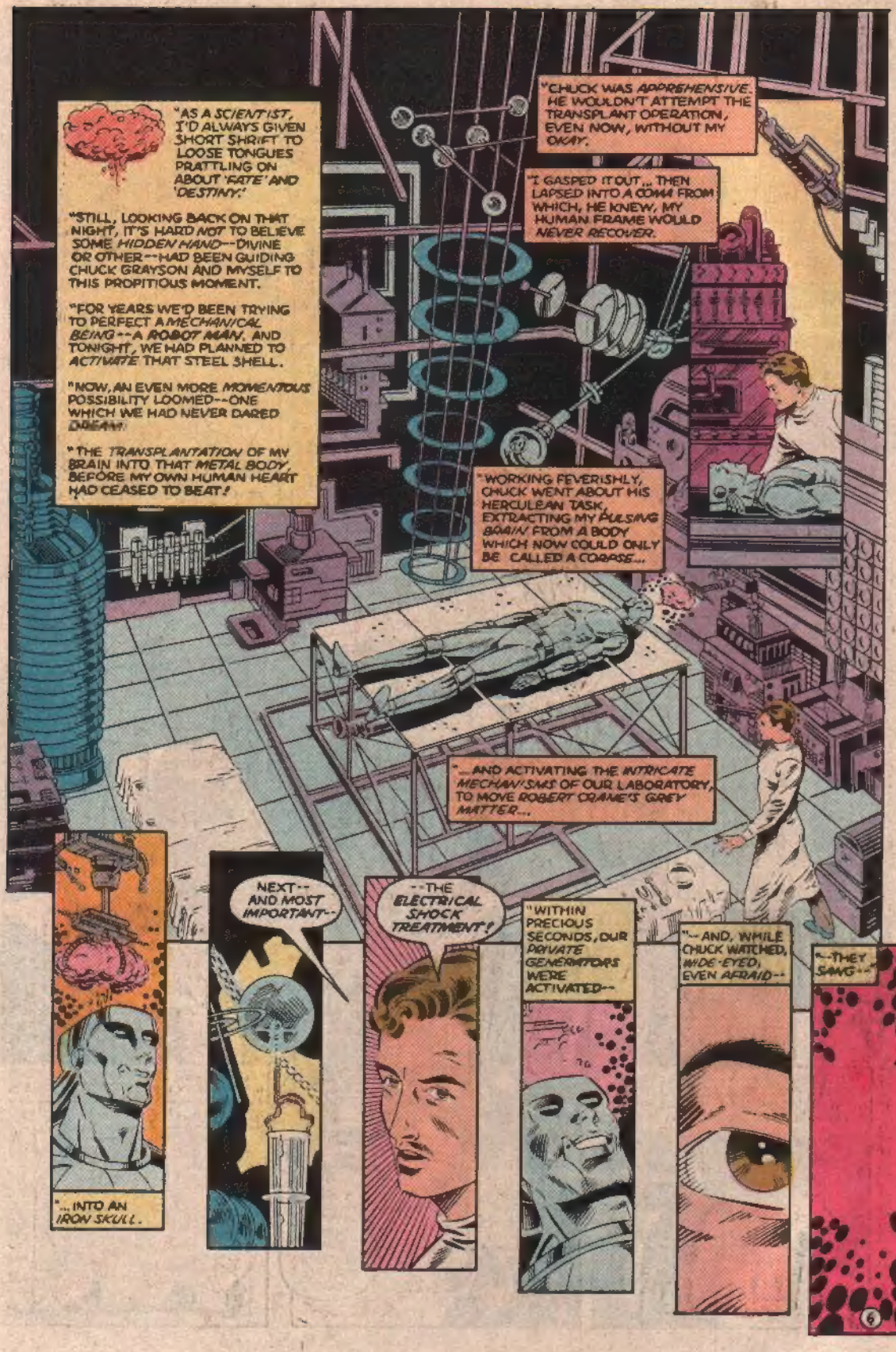
AND WE ONLY WARN PEOPLE ONCE!
ARRRRGH--!
KRAK
KRAK
KRAK
KRAK
BOB!
Y-YOU KILLED HIM, YOU FILTHY--
THUD!
NOW, LET'S SEE WHAT WAS WORTH DYIN' TO PROTECT OVER HERE...
CLICK!
WHAT THE HELL'S THIS? WERE THESE GUYS PLAYIN' WITH DOLLS?
LOOKS LIKE A STATUE -- ONLY MADE OUTTA METAL!
MASON, I'M AFRAID WE GOT A LEMON!
AIN'T NOTHING HERE WORTH A PLUGGED NICKEL.
THOSE SHOTS'RE GONNA BRING THE COPS, TOO! WE BETTER SCRAM!
JEEZ--AND HERE WE THOUGHT WE WAS GONNA MAKE A MINT!
THE FIRST THING I REMEMBER IS CHUCK GRAYSON'S VOICE, WAFTING THROUGH A MENTAL FOG...
BOB--SPEAK TO ME! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
"BUT I GUESS EVEN BY LOOKING AT ME, HE COULD TELL I WAS A GONER..."
N-NO USE... CHUCK... NO USE...
WAIT! I'VE GOT IT! THE ROBOT!
5


"AS A SCIENTIST, I'D ALWAYS GIVEN SHORT SHRIFT TO LOOSE TONGUES PRATTLING ON ABOUT 'FATE' AND 'DESTINY.'
"STILL, LOOKING BACK ON THAT NIGHT, IT'S HARD NOT TO BELIEVE SOME HIDDEN HAND--DIVINE OR OTHER--HAD BEEN GUIDING CHUCK GRAYSON AND MYSELF TO THIS PROPITIOUS MOMENT.
"FOR YEARS WE'D BEEN TRYING TO PERFECT A MECHANICAL BEING--A ROBOT MAN, AND TONIGHT, WE HAD PLANNED TO ACTIVATE THAT STEEL SHELL.
"NOW, AN EVEN MORE MOMENTOUS POSSIBILITY LOOMED--ONE WHICH WE HAD NEVER DARED DREAM!
"THE TRANSPLANTATION OF MY BRAIN INTO THAT METAL BODY, BEFORE MY OWN HUMAN HEART HAD CEASED TO BEAT!
"CHUCK WAS APPREHENSIVE. HE WOULDN'T ATTEMPT THE TRANSPLANT OPERATION, EVEN NOW, WITHOUT MY OKAY.
"I GASPED IT OUT... THEN LAPSED INTO A COMA FROM WHICH, HE KNEW, MY HUMAN FRAME WOULD NEVER RECOVER.
"WORKING FEVERISHLY, CHUCK WENT ABOUT HIS HERCULEAN TASK, EXTRACTING MY PULSING BRAIN FROM A BODY WHICH NOW COULD ONLY BE CALLED A CORPSE...
"...AND ACTIVATING THE INTRICATE MECHANISMS OF OUR LABORATORY, TO MOVE ROBERT CRANE'S GREY MATTER...
"...INTO AN IRON SKULL.
NEXT--AND MOST IMPORTANT--
--THE ELECTRICAL SHOCK TREATMENT!
"WITHIN PRECIOUS SECONDS, OUR PRIVATE GENERATORS WERE ACTIVATED--
"--AND, WHILE CHUCK WATCHED, WIDE-EYED, EVEN AFRAID--
"--THEY SANG--"
6

"--SANG A SONG OF UNBRIDLED POWER THERE IN THAT SPRAWLING MANSION ON LONG ISLAND.

"KIND OF SORRY I NEVER GOT TO SEE IT.

"CHUCK TELLS ME IT WAS LIKE SOMEBODY'S FIRE-WORKS STAND GOING UP IN A BLAZE OF ROMAN CANDLES, CHERRY BOMBS, AND VESUVIUS FOUNTAINS.

"I THINK SOMEHOW I FELT IT, THOUGH. I'M CERTAIN I CAN RECALL MY BRAIN COMING AWAKE, AS IF AFTER A LONG SLEEP.

"OR MAYBE IT WAS COMING ALIVE AGAIN, AS IF I'D BEEN--

" BUT I'M NOT A METAPHYSICAL TYPE, REMEMBER? I'M A SCIENTIST.

"I BELIEVE NOT WHAT I SEE, OR EVEN WHAT I THINK--BUT WHAT I CAN MEASURE.

"ONE THING CAN BE MEASURED: TIME.

"IT WAS 12:43 A.M. WHEN THE GENERATORS STOPPED HUMMING, AND CHUCK CLAMPED SHUT THAT GLEAMING METAL CRANIUM...

SNAP

"...AND TRUDGED WEARILY FROM THE LAB.

BOB'S BRAIN IS STILL FUNCTIONING INSIDE THAT METAL BODY.

IT'S TRUE! IT ALL CHECKS OUT!

ALIVE...

HE'S ALIVE...!

"MEANWHILE, MASON HAD HAD SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF CHUCK IDENTIFYING HIM AS MY KILLER...

YOU HEARD ME RIGHT, OFFICER...

THE SOUND OF SHOTS--COMING FROM Dr. ROBERT CRANE'S PLACE?

AND YOU SAY YOU SAW HIS ASSISTANT DO IT? WHO IS THIS, ANYHOW?

HELLO, HELLO?

DAMN! BETTER GO CHECK ON THE DOC.

"AND ALL THE WHILE, SMILING IN HIS SLEEP AT THE FAST-FADING REMEMBRANCE OF A TASK WELL PERFORMED, CHUCK GRAYSON SLEPT THE SLEEP OF THE JUST."

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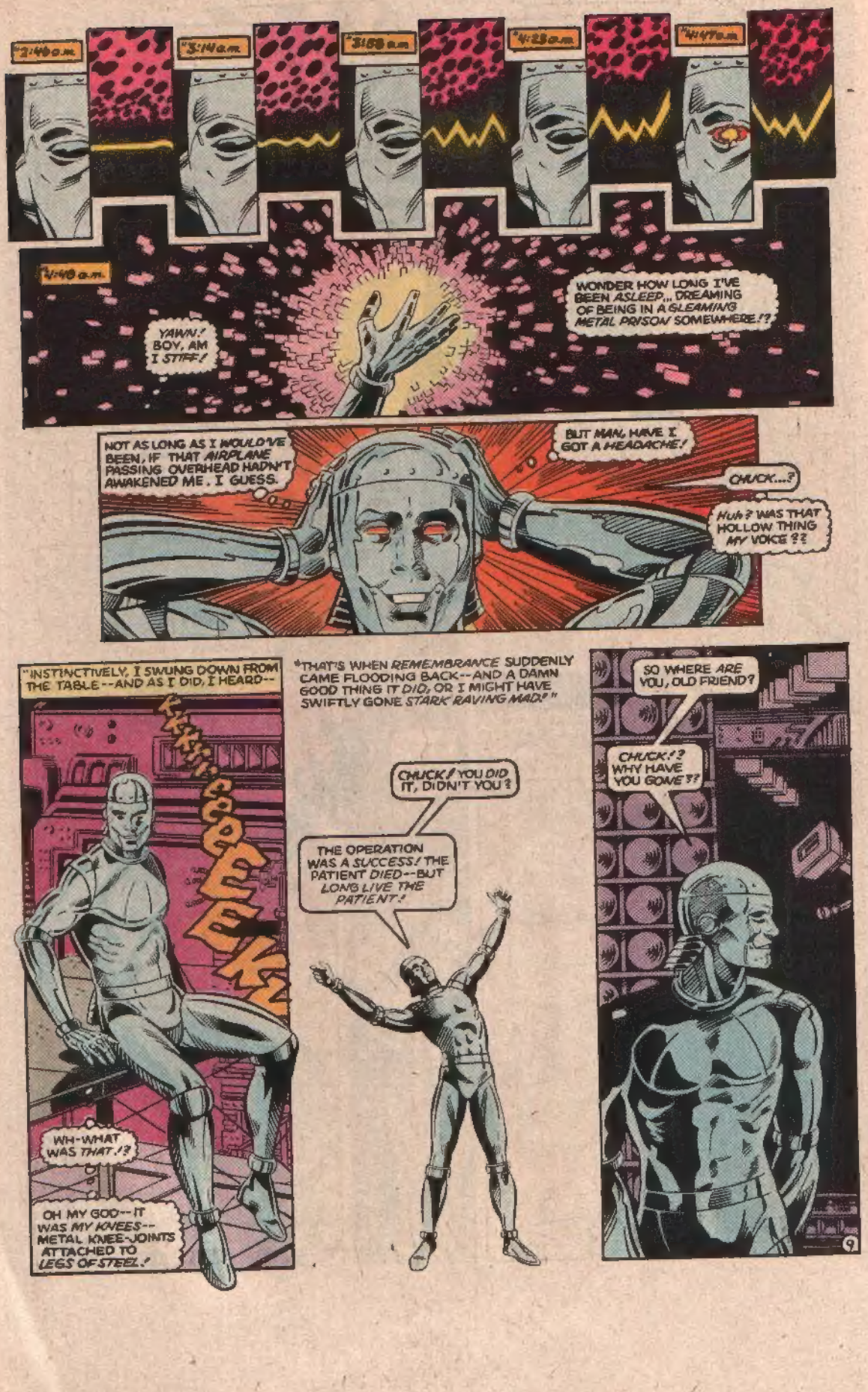
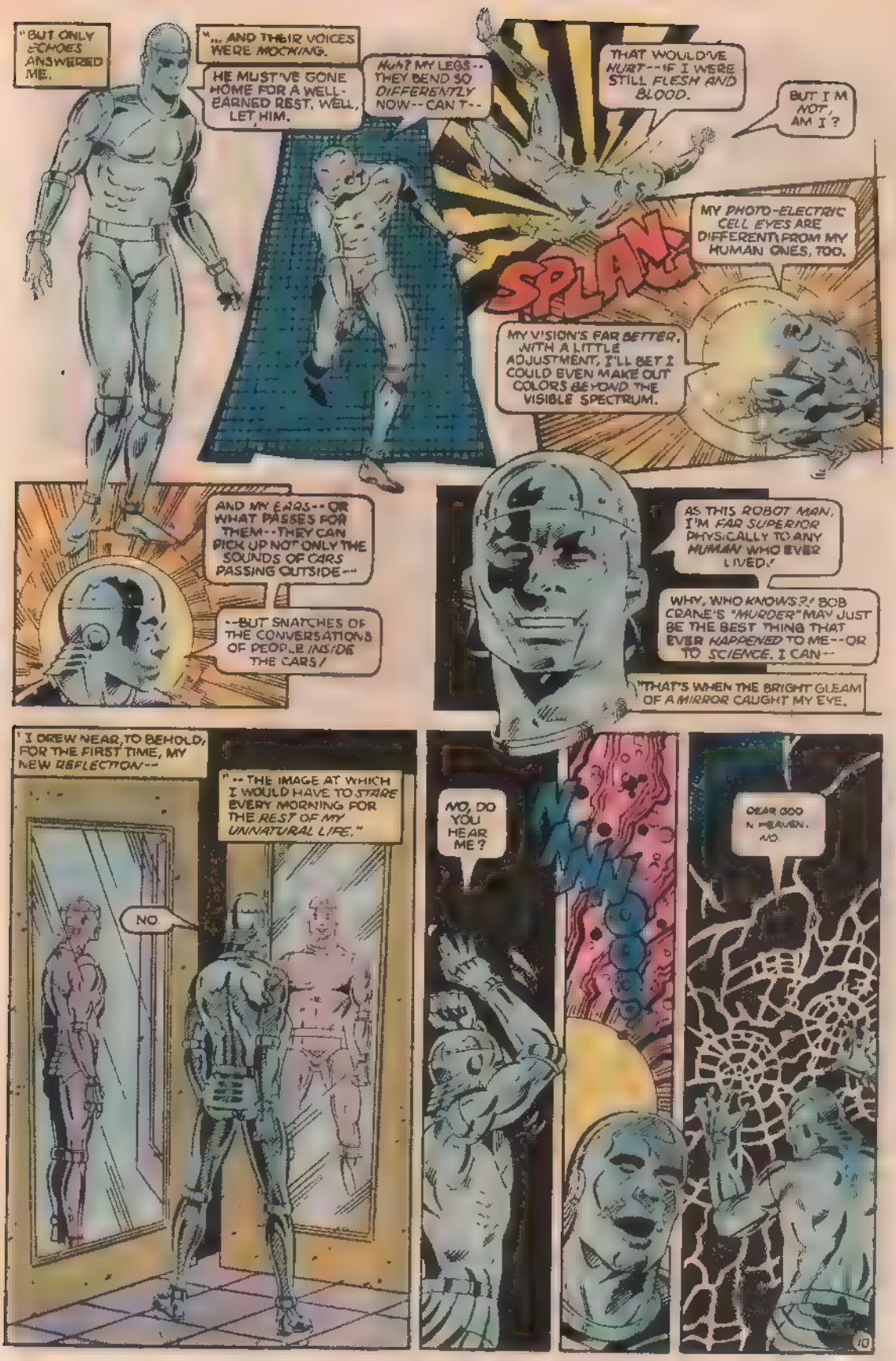
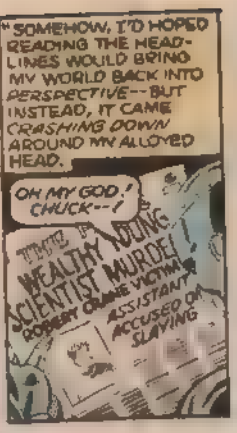

2:40 a.m.
3:14 a.m.
3:58 a.m.
4:25 a.m.
4:47 a.m.
4:48 a.m.
YAWN! BOY, AM I STIFF!
WONDER HOW LONG I'VE BEEN ASLEEP... DREAMING OF BEING IN A GLEAMING METAL PRISON SOMEWHERE!?
NOT AS LONG AS I WOULD'VE BEEN, IF THAT AIRPLANE PASSING OVERHEAD HADN'T AWAKENED ME. I GUESS.
BUT MAN, HAVE I GOT A HEADACHE!
CHUCK...?
Huh? WAS THAT HOLLOW THING MY VOICE??
"INSTINCTIVELY, I SWUNG DOWN FROM THE TABLE--AND AS I DID, I HEARD--
KKKK

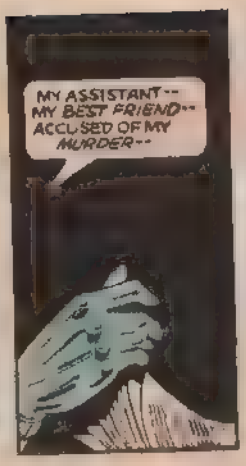

"BUT ONLY ECHOES ANSWERED ME.
"... AND THEIR VOICES WERE MOCKING.
HE MUST'VE GONE HOME FOR A WELL-EARNED REST. WELL, LET HIM.
Huh? MY LEGS--THEY BEND SO DIFFERENTLY NOW--CAN T--
THAT WOULD'VE HURT--IF I WERE STILL FLESH AND BLOOD.
BUT I'M NOT, AM I?
SPLAK
MY PHOTO-ELECTRIC CELL EYES ARE DIFFERENT FROM MY HUMAN ONES, TOO.
MY VISION'S FAR BETTER, WITH A LITTLE ADJUSTMENT. I'LL BET I COULD EVEN MAKE OUT COLORS BEYOND THE VISIBLE SPECTRUM.
AND MY EARS--OR WHAT PASSES FOR THEM--THEY CAN PICK UP NOT ONLY THE SOUNDS OF CARS PASSING OUTSIDE--
--BUT SNATCHES OF THE CONVERSATIONS OF PEOPLE INSIDE THE CARS!
AS THIS ROBOT MAN, I'M FAR SUPERIOR PHYSICALLY TO ANY HUMAN WHO EVER LIVED!
WHY, WHO KNOWS?! BOB CRANE'S "MURDER" MAY JUST BE THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO ME--OR TO SCIENCE. I CAN--
"THAT'S WHEN THE BRIGHT GLEAM OF A MIRROR CAUGHT MY EYE.
"I DREW NEAR, TO BEHOLD, FOR THE FIRST TIME, MY NEW REFLECTION--
"--THE IMAGE AT WHICH I WOULD HAVE TO STARE EVERY MORNING FOR THE REST OF MY UNNATURAL LIFE."
NO.
NO, DO YOU HEAR ME?
DEAR GOD IN HEAVEN, NO.
10

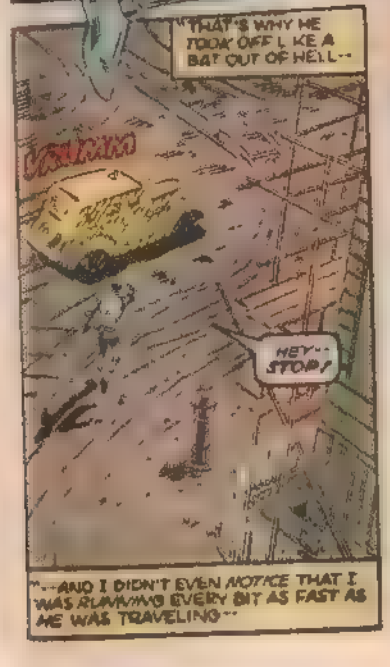
"JUST THEN, AT A FAMILIAR *PLUNK*, I REACHED FURTIVELY OUT MY FRONT DOOR...

"...AS A STARTLED DELIVERY BOY RACED OFF TO TELL HIS FRIENDS ABOUT A *METAL CLAW* HE'D SEEN SNATCH THE *MORNING PAPER*.

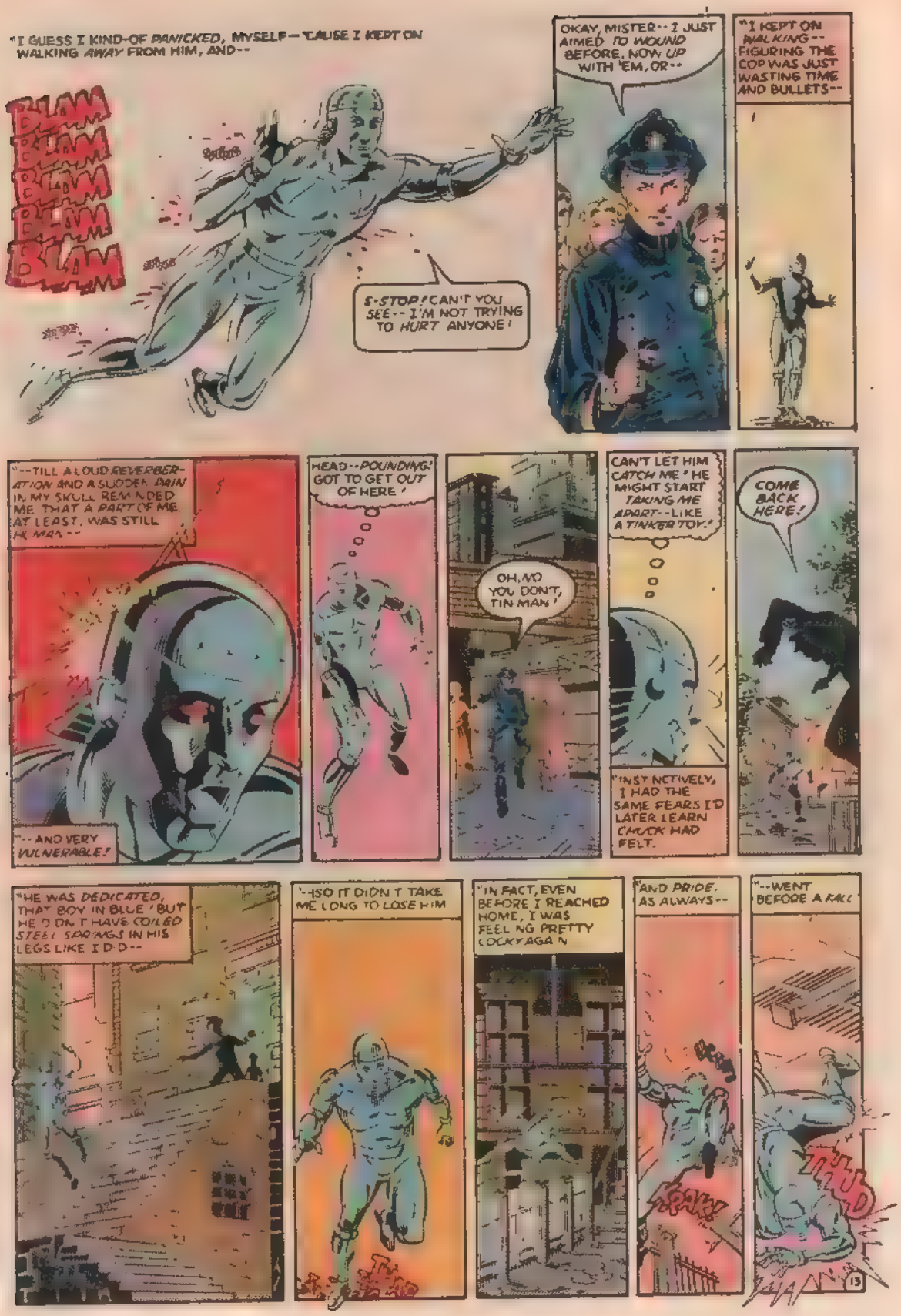
"SOMEHOW, I'D HOPED READING THE HEADLINES WOULD BRING MY WORLD BACK INTO *PERSPECTIVE*--BUT INSTEAD, IT CAME *CRASHING DOWN* AROUND MY ALLOYED HEAD.

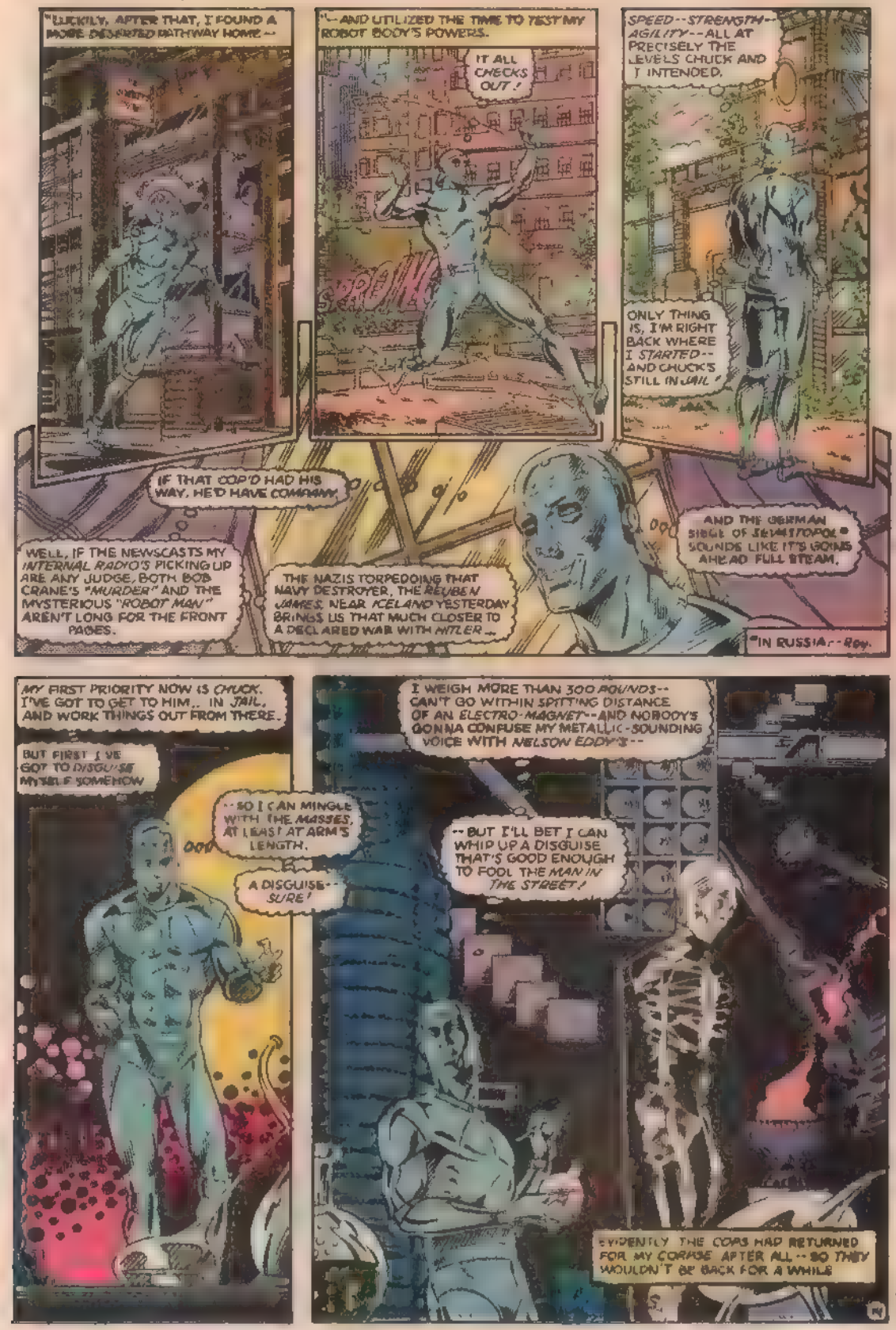






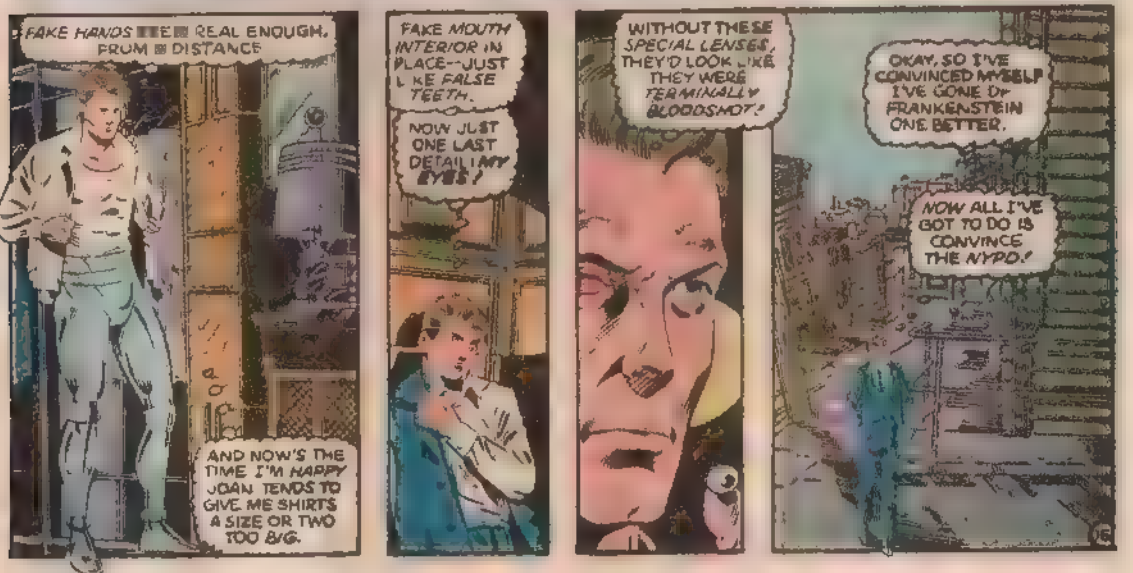
"STARTLED BY THE STARK FEAR I READ IN HIS EYES AS HE STARED WIDE-EYED AT ME, I DIDN'T EVEN DUCK WHEN HE GRABBED A WRENCH AND CRASHED IT AGAINST MY ROBOT SKULL.
GET OFF! GET AWAY! LEMME ALONE!
SPLANG
"ONLY THEN, MY HUMAN BRAIN INSIDE THAT METAL CASE THROBBING, DID I UNDERSTAND...
"MY INHUMAN APPEARANCE WAS ENOUGH TO TERRIFY ANYONE -- EVEN MYSELF
NO USE GIVING HIM A HEART ATTACK
I'D BETTER GET BACK HOME AND TRY PHONING THE POLICE ABOUT CHUCK --
--BEFORE I'M DECLARED A PUBLIC MENACE, LIKE SOME REFUGEE FROM A REAL-LIFE MONSTER MOVIE!
"BUT IT WAS ALREADY TOO LATE FOR ME TO AVOID FURTHER TROUBLE. FOR, AS I NEARED HOME...
THERE IT IS!
I TOLD YOU -- IT'S SOME KIND OF MECHANICAL MAN, LIKE THEY HAD AT THE WORLD'S FAIR!
THEN WHAT'S IT DOING OUT HERE? HALLOWEEN WAS LAST NIGHT!
"I DECIDED TO SPEAK -- AND THAT JUST MADE IT WORSE
PLEASE, EVERYONE, I DON'T MEAN YOU ANY HARM. I -- I'M JUST --
IT TALKS, TOO
THANK GOD -- HERE COMES A COP!
ALL RIGHT YOU - WHATEVER YOU ARE -
UP WITH YOUR HANDS -- OR SO HELP ME, I'LL SHOOT!
"HE WAS AS SCARED AS I WAS AND CAN I BLAME HIM?
12


"I GUESS I KIND-OF PANICKED, MYSELF -- 'CAUSE I KEPT ON WALKING AWAY FROM HIM, AND--
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
S-STOP! CAN'T YOU SEE -- I'M NOT TRYING TO HURT ANYONE!
OKAY, MISTER -- I JUST AIMED TO WOUND BEFORE, NOW UP WITH 'EM, OR--
"I KEPT ON WALKING -- FIGURING THE COP WAS JUST WASTING TIME AND BULLETS--
"--TILL A LOUD REVERBERATION AND A SUDDEN PAIN IN MY SKULL REMINDED ME THAT A PART OF ME AT LEAST, WAS STILL HUMAN --
"-- AND VERY VULNERABLE!
HEAD -- POUNDING! GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!
OH, NO YOU DON'T, TIN MAN!
CAN'T LET HIM CATCH ME! HE MIGHT START TAKING ME APART -- LIKE A TINKER TOY!
"INSTINCTIVELY, I HAD THE SAME FEARS I'D LATER LEARN CHUCK HAD FELT.
COME BACK HERE!
"HE WAS DEDICATED, THAT BOY IN BLUE! BUT HE DIDN'T HAVE COILED STEEL SPRINGS IN HIS LEGS LIKE I DID--
"-SO IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO LOSE HIM
"IN FACT, EVEN BEFORE I REACHED HOME, I WAS FEELING PRETTY COCKY AGAIN
"AND PRIDE, AS ALWAYS --
SPAK!
"--WENT BEFORE A FALL
THUD
13


"LUCKILY, AFTER THAT, I FOUND A MORE DESERTED PATHWAY HOME --
"-- AND UTILIZED THE TIME TO TEST MY ROBOT BODY'S POWERS.
IT ALL CHECKS OUT!
SPEED--STRENGTH--AGILITY--ALL AT PRECISELY THE LEVELS CHUCK AND I INTENDED.
ONLY THING IS, I'M RIGHT BACK WHERE I STARTED--AND CHUCK'S STILL IN JAIL."
IF THAT COP'D HAD HIS WAY, HE'D HAVE COMPANY.
AND THE GERMAN SIEGE OF SEVASTOPOL SOUNDS LIKE IT'S GOING AHEAD FULL STEAM.
WELL, IF THE NEWSCASTS MY INTERNAL RADIO'S PICKING UP ARE ANY JUDGE, BOTH BOB CRANE'S "MURDER" AND THE MYSTERIOUS "ROBOT MAN" AREN'T LONG FOR THE FRONT PAGES.
THE NAZIS TORPEDOING THAT NAVY DESTROYER, THE REUBEN JAMES, NEAR ICELAND YESTERDAY BRINGS US THAT MUCH CLOSER TO A DECLARED WAR WITH HITLER --
IN RUSSIA--Roy.
MY FIRST PRIORITY NOW IS CHUCK. I'VE GOT TO GET TO HIM.. IN JAIL, AND WORK THINGS OUT FROM THERE.
BUT FIRST I'VE GOT TO DISGUISE MYSELF SOMEHOW
--SO I CAN MINGLE WITH THE MASSES, AT LEAST AT ARM'S LENGTH.
A DISGUISE--SURE!
I WEIGH MORE THAN 300 POUNDS--CAN'T GO WITHIN SPITTING DISTANCE OF AN ELECTRO-MAGNET--AND NOBODY'S GONNA CONFUSE MY METALLIC-SOUNDING VOICE WITH NELSON EDDY'S--
--BUT I'LL BET I CAN WHIP UP A DISGUISE THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH TO FOOL THE MAN IN THE STREET!
EVIDENTLY THE COPS HAD RETURNED FOR MY CORPSE AFTER ALL--SO THEY WOULDN'T BE BACK FOR A WHILE

AND SO ROBERT CRANE FRESH IN HIS NEW BODY AS THE ROBOT MAN, SET TO WORK ON A THIRD IDENTITY -- REALLY LITTLE MORE THAN A RUBBEROID MASK YET SOMEHOW, I FELT SO HEADY I MOMENTARILY CONSIDERED REMAKING MYSELF, IN THE IMAGE OF AN OLD MAN .. A NEGRO... EVEN A VERY BIG-BONED WOMAN...

"BUT IN THE END, COMMON SENSE PREVAILED."
BETTER SETTLE FOR A WHITE MALE CAUCASIAN, SAME AGE AS BOB CRANE JUST A BIT MORE MUSCULAR, AND WITH DIFFERENT FACIAL FEATURES.
ANYTH NG MORE AMBITIOUS, I M LIABLE TO SCREW UP N FRONT OF NEW YORK'S FINEST
Hmmm NOT BAD-LOOKING, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF
I CAN CHANGE FACES AS EASILY AS MOST PEOPLE DO SHOES MIGHT BE SOME POSSIBILITIES THERE.


FAKE HANDS REAL ENOUGH, FROM DISTANCE
AND NOW'S THE TIME I'M HAPPY JOAN TENDS TO GIVE ME SHIRTS A SIZE OR TWO TOO BIG.
FAKE MOUTH INTERIOR IN PLACE--JUST LIKE FALSE TEETH.
NOW JUST ONE LAST DETAIL! MY EYES!
WITHOUT THESE SPECIAL LENSES, THEY'D LOOK LIKE THEY WERE TERMINALLY BLOODSHOT!
OKAY, SO I'VE CONVINCED MYSELF I'VE GONE DR FRANKENSTEIN ONE BETTER.
NOW ALL I'VE GOT TO DO IS CONVINCE THE NYPD!

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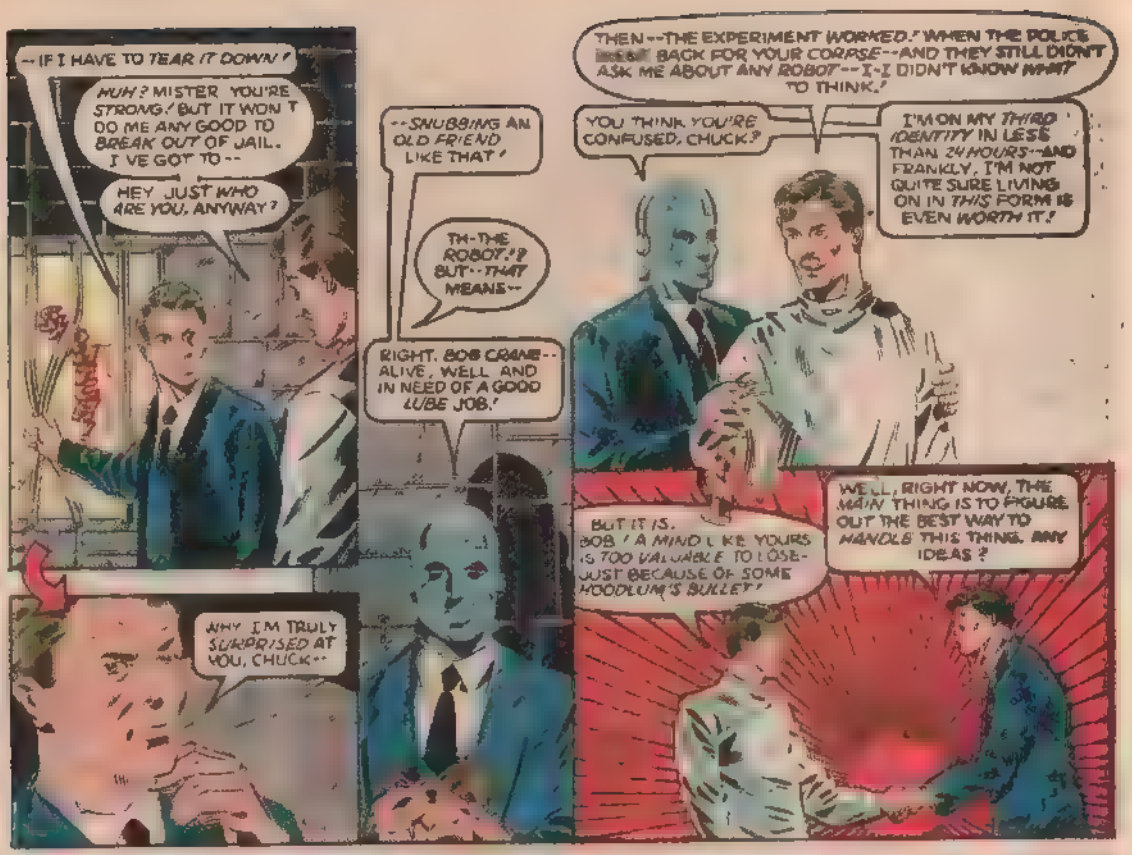
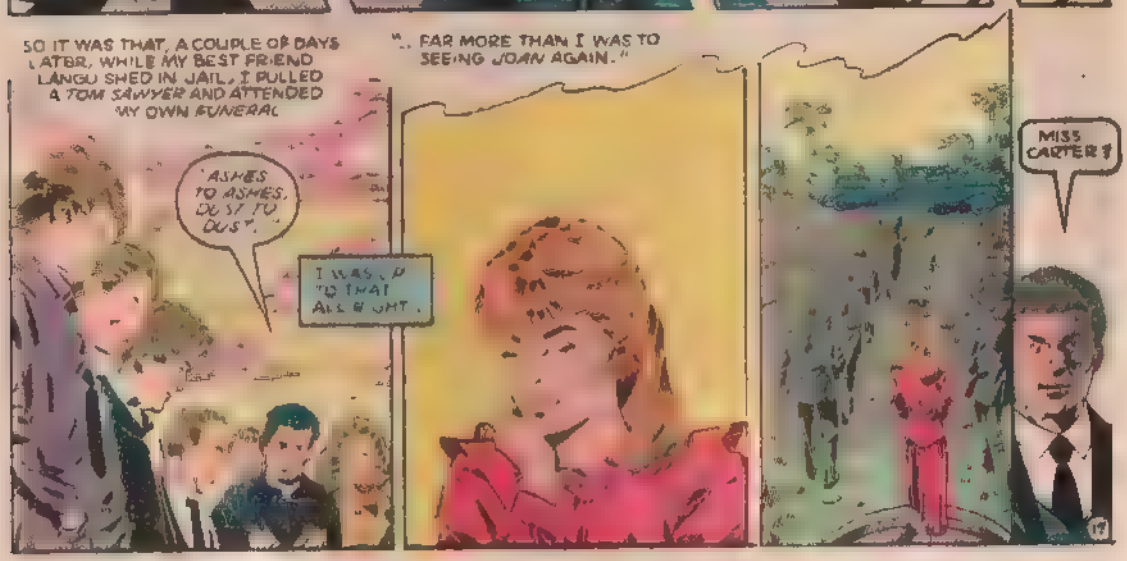
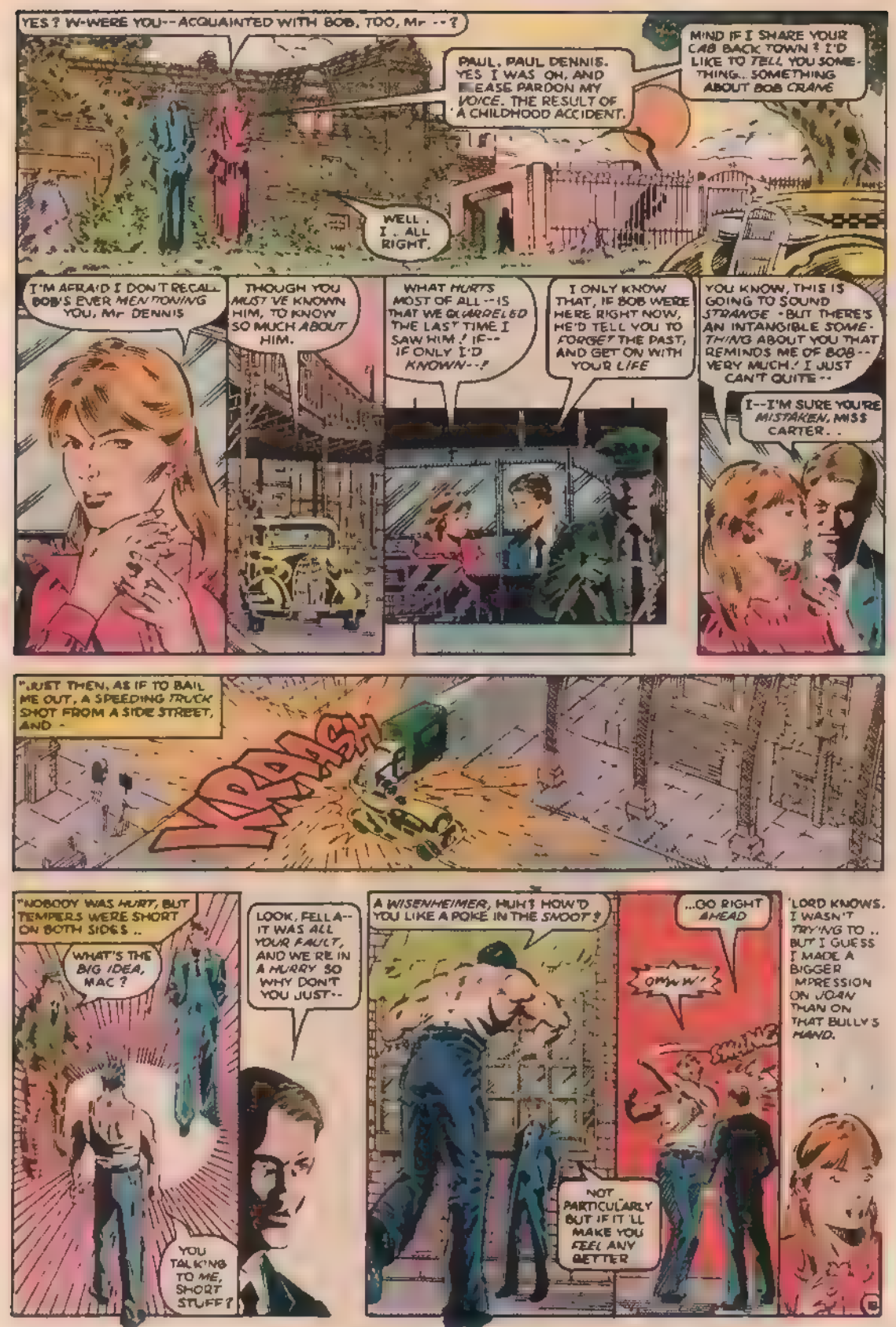
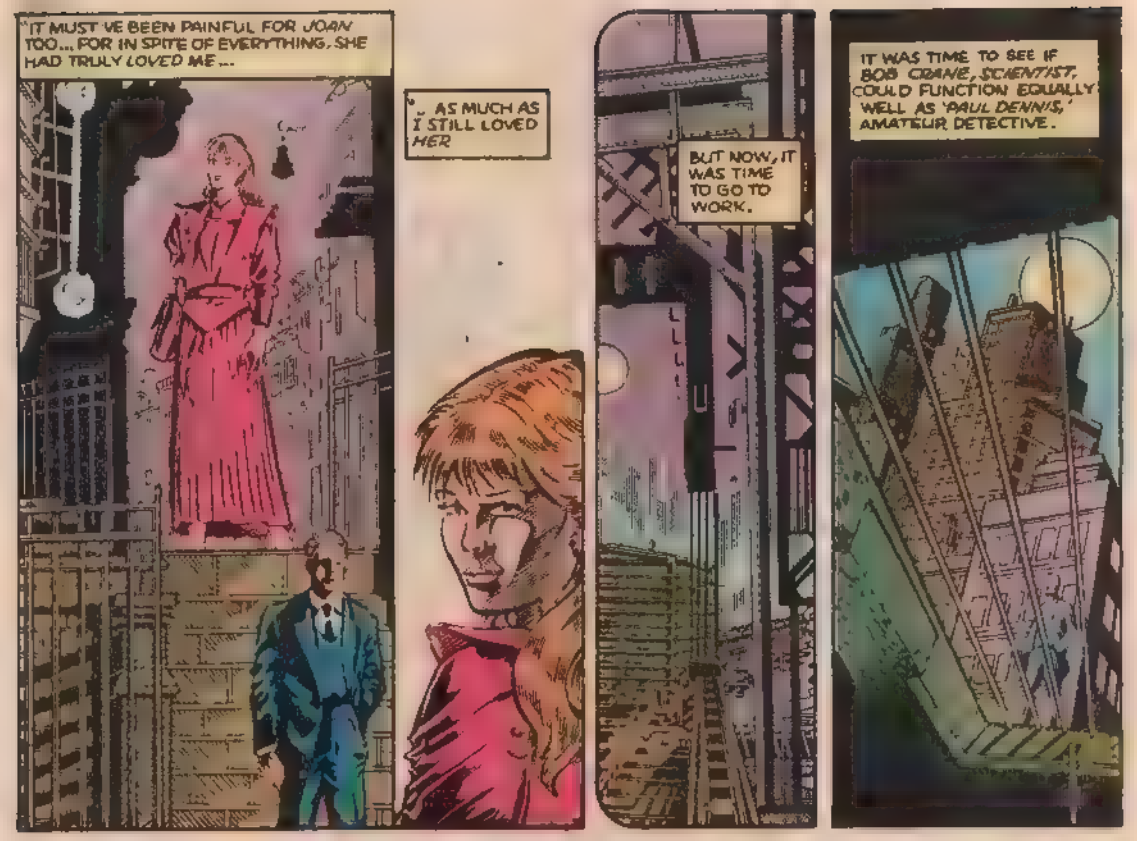

--IF I HAVE TO TEAR IT DOWN!
HUH? MISTER YOU'RE STRONG! BUT IT WON'T DO ME ANY GOOD TO BREAK OUT OF JAIL. I'VE GOT TO--
HEY! JUST WHO ARE YOU, ANYWAY?
--SNUBBING AN OLD FRIEND LIKE THAT!
TH-THE ROBOT!? BUT--THAT MEANS--
RIGHT. BOB CRANE--ALIVE, WELL AND IN NEED OF A GOOD LUBE JOB.
THEN--THE EXPERIMENT WORKED! WHEN THE POLICE [illegible] BACK FOR YOUR CORPSE--AND THEY STILL DIDN'T ASK ME ABOUT ANY ROBOT--I--I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK!
YOU THINK YOU'RE CONFUSED, CHUCK?
I'M ON MY THIRD IDENTITY IN LESS THAN 24 HOURS--AND FRANKLY, I'M NOT QUITE SURE LIVING ON IN THIS FORM IS EVEN WORTH IT!
WHY I'M TRULY SURPRISED AT YOU, CHUCK--
BUT IT IS, BOB! A MIND LIKE YOURS IS TOO VALUABLE TO LOSE--JUST BECAUSE OF SOME HOODLUM'S BULLET!
WELL, RIGHT NOW, THE MAIN THING IS TO FIGURE OUT THE BEST WAY TO HANDLE THIS THING. ANY IDEAS?

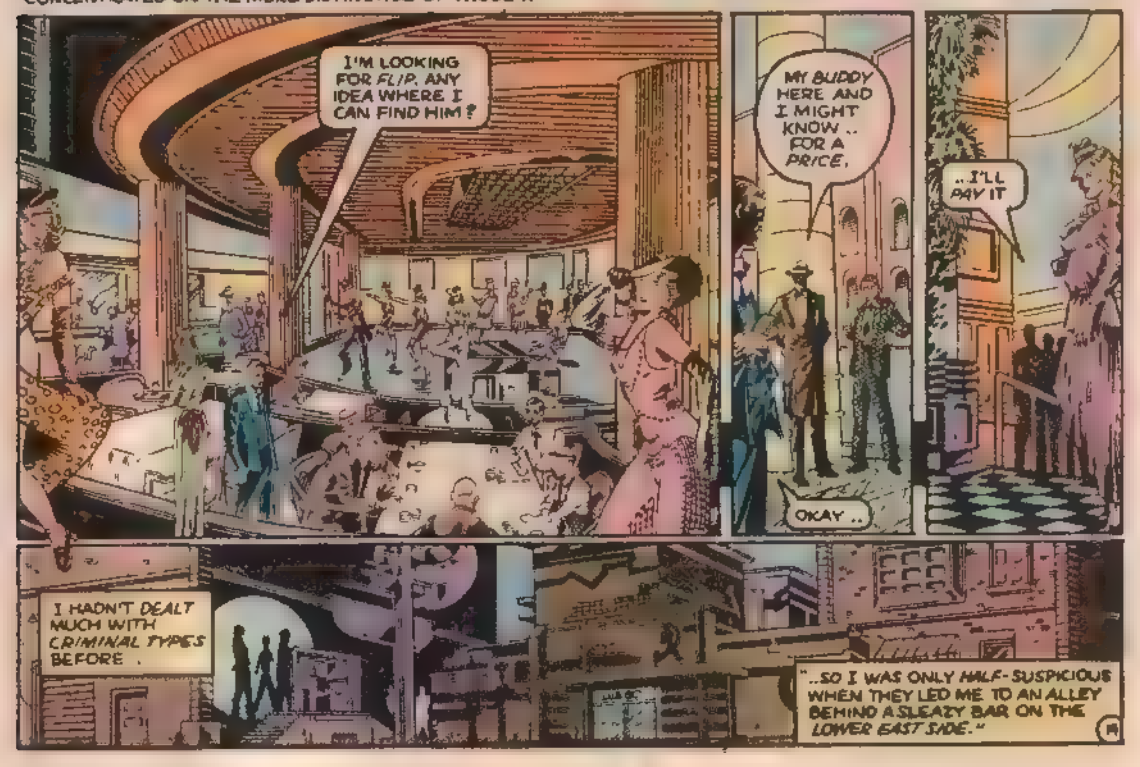
I--SEE WHAT YOU MEAN. IT'D BE HARD TO CONVINCE ANYBODY THAT'S REALLY BOB CRANE'S BRAIN INSIDE THAT METAL CASING.
LET'S SAVE THAT FOR A LAST RESORT, OKAY?
BEST WAY TO CLEAR YOU--IF YOU'LL AGREE TO SIT TIGHT--IS FOR ME TO BRING IN MY REAL KILLER!
YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT, BOB.
"HAVIL, 'REMEMBER? OKAY, SO I'LL GET RIGHT ON IT--OH, AND, THANKS, OLD BUDDY.
WHOEVER I AM NOW--YOU SAVED MY LIFE!


SO IT WAS THAT, A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER, WHILE MY BEST FRIEND LANGU SHED IN JAIL, I PULLED A TOM SAWYER AND ATTENDED MY OWN FUNERAL
"ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST."
I WAS UP TO THAT ALL NIGHT.
"... FAR MORE THAN I WAS TO SEEING JOAN AGAIN."
MISS CARTER?


YES? W-WERE YOU--ACQUAINTED WITH BOB, TOO, Mr --?
PAUL. PAUL DENNIS. YES I WAS OH, AND PLEASE PARDON MY VOICE. THE RESULT OF A CHILDHOOD ACCIDENT.
MIND IF I SHARE YOUR CAB BACK TOWN? I'D LIKE TO TELL YOU SOMETHING.. SOMETHING ABOUT BOB CRANE
WELL. I. ALL RIGHT.
I'M AFRAID I DON'T RECALL BOB'S EVER MENTIONING YOU, Mr DENNIS
THOUGH YOU MUST'VE KNOWN HIM, TO KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT HIM.
WHAT HURTS MOST OF ALL --IS THAT WE QUARRELED THE LAST TIME I SAW HIM! IF-- IF ONLY I'D KNOWN--!
I ONLY KNOW THAT, IF BOB WERE HERE RIGHT NOW, HE'D TELL YOU TO FORGET THE PAST, AND GET ON WITH YOUR LIFE
YOU KNOW, THIS IS GOING TO SOUND STRANGE -BUT THERE'S AN INTANGIBLE SOMETHING ABOUT YOU THAT REMINDS ME OF BOB-- VERY MUCH.' I JUST CAN'T QUITE--
I--I'M SURE YOU'RE MISTAKEN, MISS CARTER. .
"JUST THEN, AS IF TO BAIL ME OUT, A SPEEDING TRUCK SHOT FROM A SIDE STREET, AND -
KRAAASH
"NOBODY WAS HURT, BUT TEMPERS WERE SHORT ON BOTH SIDES ..
WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA, MAC?
LOOK, FELLA-- IT WAS ALL YOUR FAULT, AND WE'RE IN A HURRY SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST--
YOU TALKING TO ME, SHORT STUFF?
A WISENHEIMER, HUH? HOW'D YOU LIKE A POKE IN THE SNOOT?
...GO RIGHT AHEAD
OMWW!
NOT PARTICULARLY BUT IF IT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL ANY BETTER
'LORD KNOWS. I WASN'T TRYING TO .. BUT I GUESS I MADE A BIGGER IMPRESSION ON JOAN THAN ON THAT BULLY'S HAND.



"FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS AND NIGHTS, I HAUNTED SOME OF THE MOST PROMINENT *DENS OF INIQUITY* IN MANHATTAN, QUEENS, BROOKLYN, THE BRONX...EVEN STATEN ISLAND. I KNEW ONLY SINGLE NAMES OF TWO OF MY "KILLERS," SO I CONCENTRATED ON THE MORE *DISTINCTIVE* OF THOSE ..



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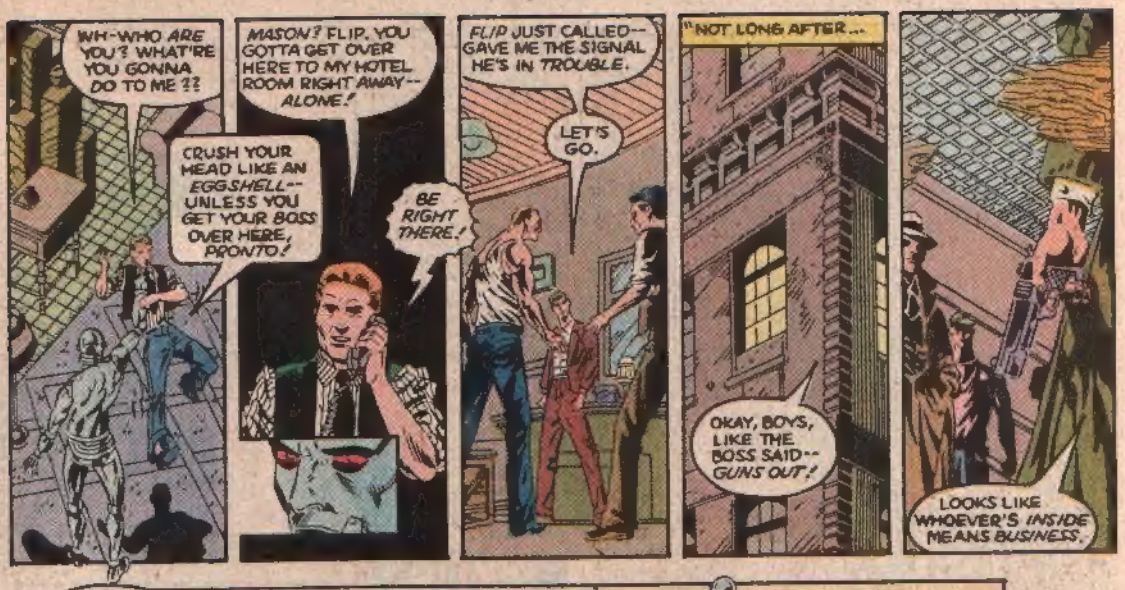
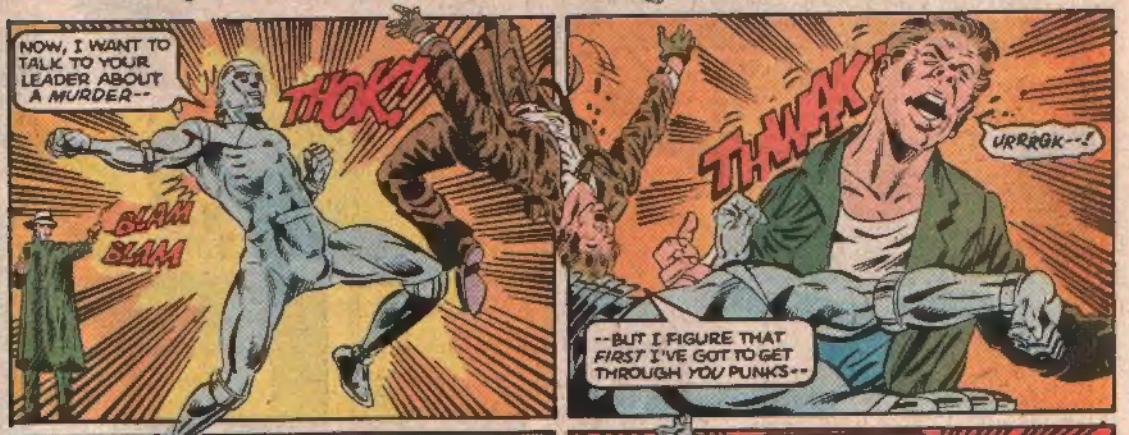
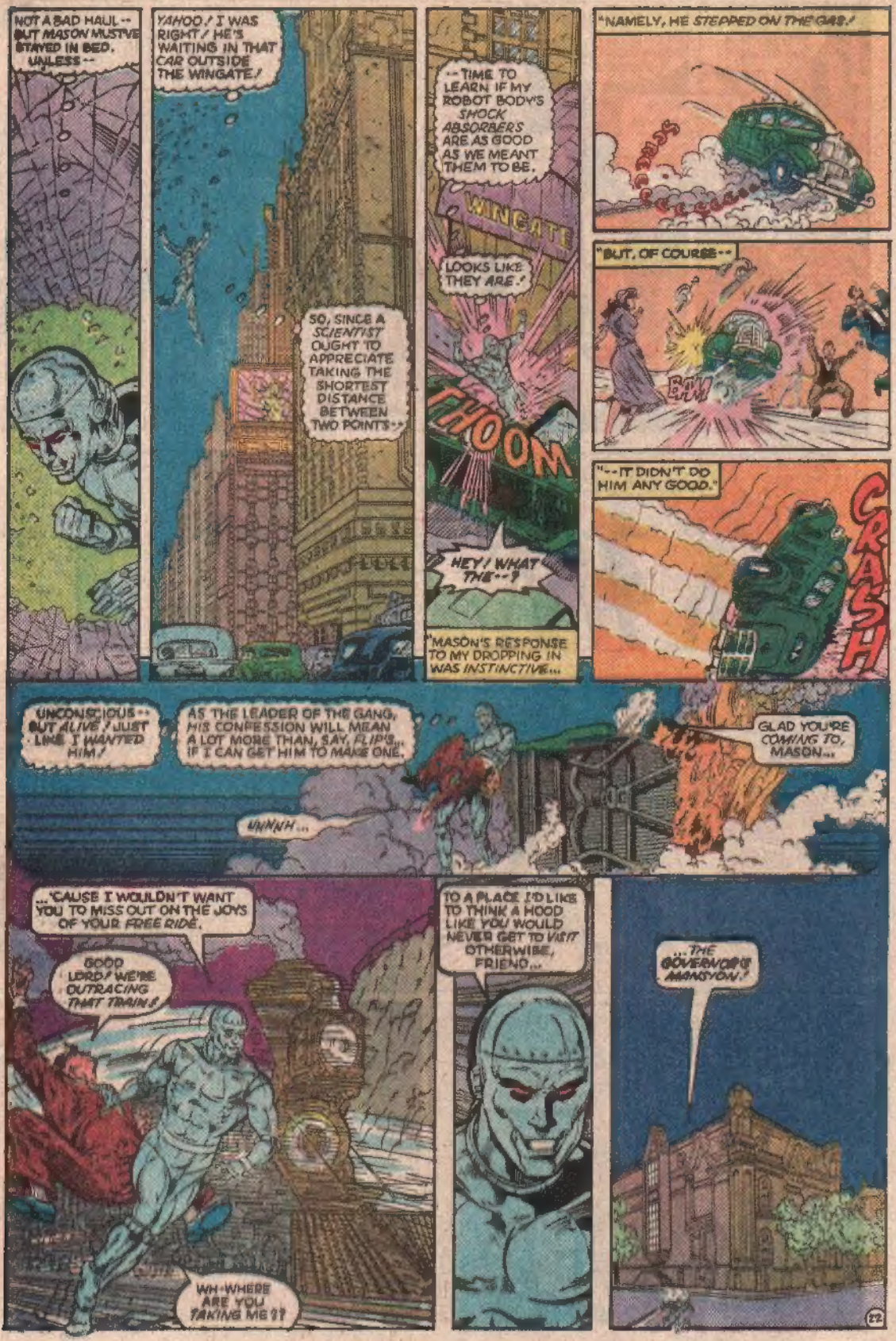

WH-WHO ARE YOU? WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO TO ME??
CRUSH YOUR HEAD LIKE AN EGGSHELL-- UNLESS YOU GET YOUR BOSS OVER HERE, PRONTO!
MASON? FLIP. YOU GOTTA GET OVER HERE TO MY HOTEL ROOM RIGHT AWAY-- ALONE!
BE RIGHT THERE!
FLIP JUST CALLED-- GAVE ME THE SIGNAL HE'S IN TROUBLE.
LET'S GO.
"NOT LONG AFTER...
OKAY, BOYS, LIKE THE BOSS SAID-- GUNS OUT!
LOOKS LIKE WHOEVER'S INSIDE MEANS BUSINESS.

HEY! WHAT THE HELL'S THAT!?
IT'S THAT BIG STEEL STATUE FROM DOC CRANE'S! WHAT'S IT DOING HERE?
THE QUESTION IS-- WHAT AM I ABOUT TO DO!
HUH? IT'S TALKIN'-- MOVIN'!
YOU ARE THE OBSERVANT ONE, AREN'T YOU, FELLA?


NOW, I WANT TO TALK TO YOUR LEADER ABOUT A MURDER--
THOK!
SLAM SLAM
THWAK!
URRRGK--!
--BUT I FIGURE THAT FIRST I'VE GOT TO GET THROUGH YOU PUNKS--

SLAP!
--SO I FIGURE THE SOONER I GET STARTED--
--THE SOONER AN INNOCENT MAN GOES FREE!
WHOP!


NOT A BAD HAUL -- BUT MASON MUSTVE STAYED IN BED, UNLESS --
YAHOO! I WAS RIGHT! HE'S WAITING IN THAT CAR OUTSIDE THE WINGATE!
SO, SINCE A SCIENTIST OUGHT TO APPRECIATE TAKING THE SHORTEST DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO POINTS--
-- TIME TO LEARN IF MY ROBOT BODY'S SHOCK ABSORBERS ARE AS GOOD AS WE MEANT THEM TO BE.
WINGATE
LOOKS LIKE THEY ARE!
THOOM
HEY! WHAT THE--?
MASON'S RESPONSE TO MY DROPPING IN WAS INSTINCTIVE...
"NAMELY, HE STEPPED ON THE GAS!
"BUT, OF COURSE--
BAM
"--IT DIDN'T DO HIM ANY GOOD."
CRASH
UNCONSCIOUS -- BUT ALIVE! JUST LIKE I WANTED HIM!
AS THE LEADER OF THE GANG, HIS CONFESSION WILL MEAN A LOT MORE THAN, SAY, FLIP'S... IF I CAN GET HIM TO MAKE ONE.
GLAD YOU'RE COMING TO, MASON...
UNNH...
...'CAUSE I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO MISS OUT ON THE JOYS OF YOUR FREE RIDE.
GOOD LORD! WE'RE OUTRACING THAT TRAIN!
WH-WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME??
TO A PLACE I'D LIKE TO THINK A HOOD LIKE YOU WOULD NEVER GET TO VISIT OTHERWISE, FRIEND...
...THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION!
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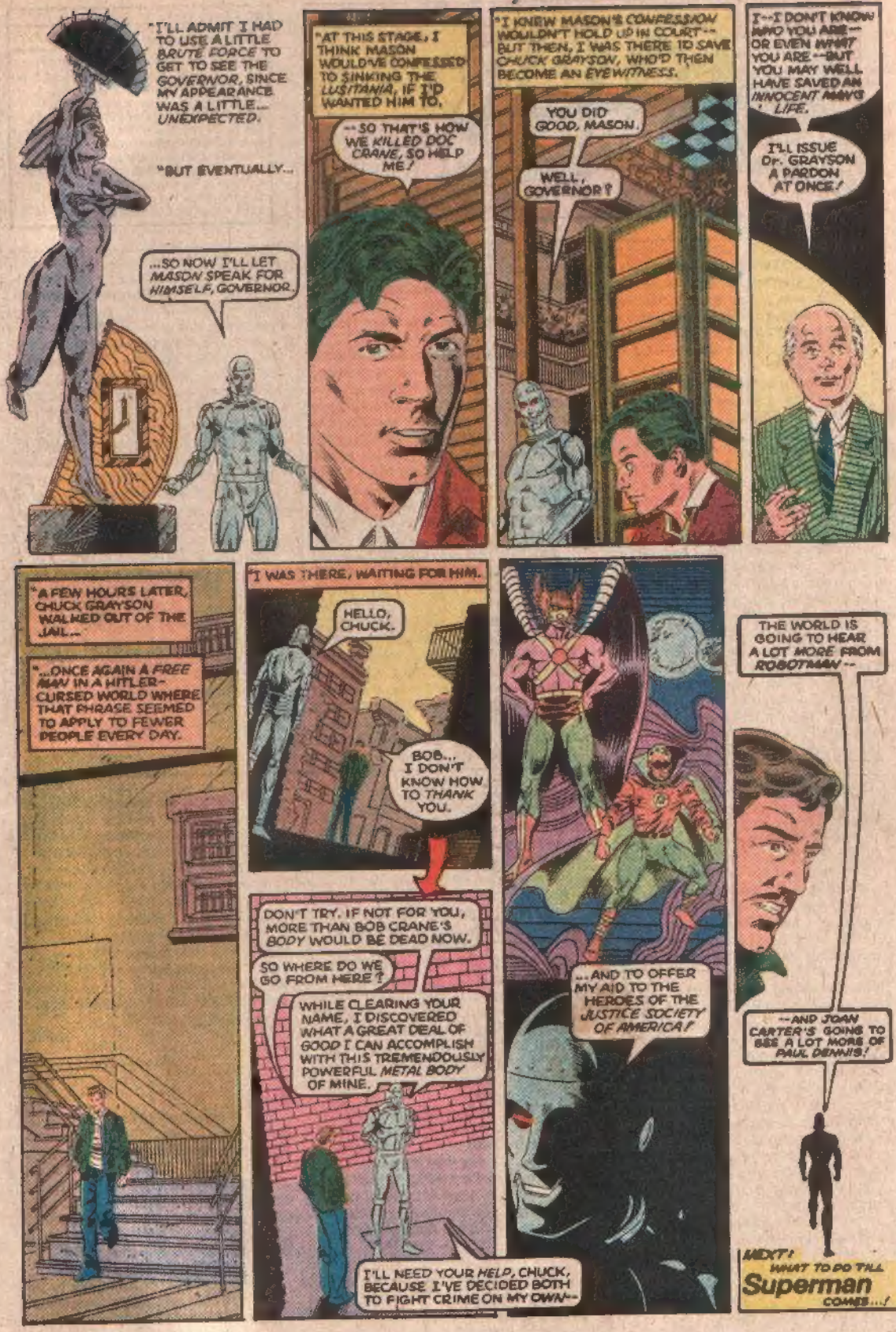
"I'LL ADMIT I HAD TO USE A LITTLE BRUTE FORCE TO GET TO SEE THE GOVERNOR, SINCE MY APPEARANCE WAS A LITTLE... UNEXPECTED.
"BUT EVENTUALLY...
...SO NOW I'LL LET MASON SPEAK FOR HIMSELF, GOVERNOR.
"AT THIS STAGE, I THINK MASON WOULD'VE CONFESSED TO SINKING THE LUSITANIA, IF I'D WANTED HIM TO.
--SO THAT'S HOW WE KILLED DOC CRANE, SO HELP ME!
"I KNEW MASON'S CONFESSION WOULDN'T HOLD UP IN COURT-- BUT THEN, I WAS THERE TO SAVE CHUCK GRAYSON, WHO'D THEN BECOME AN EYEWITNESS.
YOU DID GOOD, MASON.
WELL, GOVERNOR?
I--I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE-- OR EVEN WHAT YOU ARE--BUT YOU MAY WELL HAVE SAVED AN INNOCENT MAN'S LIFE.
I'LL ISSUE Dr. GRAYSON A PARDON AT ONCE!
"A FEW HOURS LATER, CHUCK GRAYSON WALKED OUT OF THE JAIL--
"...ONCE AGAIN A FREE MAN IN A HITLER-CURSED WORLD WHERE THAT PHRASE SEEMED TO APPLY TO FEWER PEOPLE EVERY DAY.
"I WAS THERE, WAITING FOR HIM.
HELLO, CHUCK.
BOB... I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU.
DON'T TRY. IF NOT FOR YOU, MORE THAN BOB CRANE'S BODY WOULD BE DEAD NOW.
SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?
WHILE CLEARING YOUR NAME, I DISCOVERED WHAT A GREAT DEAL OF GOOD I CAN ACCOMPLISH WITH THIS TREMENDOUSLY POWERFUL METAL BODY OF MINE.
I'LL NEED YOUR HELP, CHUCK, BECAUSE I'VE DECIDED BOTH TO FIGHT CRIME ON MY OWN--
...AND TO OFFER MY AID TO THE HEROES OF THE JUSTICE SOCIETY OF AMERICA!
THE WORLD IS GOING TO HEAR A LOT MORE FROM ROBOTMAN--
--AND JOAN CARTER'S GOING TO SEE A LOT MORE OF PAUL DENNIS!
NEXT! WHAT TO DO TILL Superman COMES...!